

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

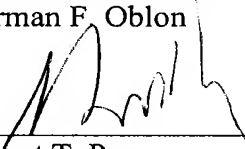
Claim 1 has been amended to delete a superfluous limitation. Entry of this amendment and the amendment filed on January 16, 2009 is respectfully requested in view of the RCE being filed herewith. It is noted that basis for the further limitation introduced on January 16, 2009, i.e., that the primary burners are provided at a location such that heat from the combustion of the fuel contributes to the reduction of the metal oxide, is found in the paragraph beginning at line 7 of page 8 in the specification.

Applicants believe that the present application is in a condition for allowance and respectfully solicit an early Notice of Allowability.

Respectfully submitted,

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